STEREO: **MFS 764**

The Joy of BELLY DANCING

(An Illustrated and Expanded Instruction Booklet by VINA)

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All Photos of Belly-Dancer JULIANA by TASSO MAVRIS.

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Introduction

The aging process begins at approximately 20 years of age. Muscles and ligaments tighten up restricting many movements. This in turn causes tension and insomnia. Belly dancing helps to stretch these ligaments and muscles thus maintaining the body's suppleness. It strengthens the whole body promoting good circulation which helps to retard the aging process. It is an excellent way of exercising for both males and females from 7 to 70 years of age, especially the middle-aged, adolescents, students, housewives, business men, and for women, prenatally and postnatally. It is recommended by many doctors as a form of therapy for many physical and mental disorders. Exercising just ten minutes a day will promote a feeling of well being and add that extra spark to your life.

Begin by keeping in mind that your body must be *completely relaxed* at all times. This is very important. It will enhance and beautify your movements.

The basic foot movements are danced in even rhythm, 4/4 time, with three steps to a measure pausing on the fourth beat as you bring your foot forward to begin all over again. You may begin on either foot and keep each step fully in contact with the ground. If the tempo speeds up or slows down, your step should follow the rhythm. *Timing* is very important.

The hands are bent slightly at the wrists and are turned in a complete circle away from your body. A complete circle of both hands is made to the count of four beats in time with your feet, according to the tempo of the music. The fingers should be relaxed and flexed slightly all through the dance.

The arms are relaxed and bent at the elbows at all times. Move them *gradually* in all directions as you *continuously* rotate your hands from the wrists. Bring them both up over your head with hands back to back; one arm up over your head and the other arm down, reversing this movement; both arms up over your head swaying them from side to side; back down again and out to your sides at hip level in a stationary position with hands bent upward at the wrists, as you move into a shoulder shimmy (see later). Note all pictures in the booklet for arms and hand positioning.

PHOTO #1

PHOTO #2

PHOTO #3

Isolated Body Movements

ARM SWING & HAND TURNS—Good for your upper arms and shoulders.

Extend both arms forward at waist level in front of you bending them slightly at the elbows and wrists with palms facing the ceiling. Both hands should be about 6″ apart. Sway them both down and out to your sides, up over your head crossing them over so that the palms face each other (Photo #1). Now turn both hands as you bring them down so that the palms are away from each other, crossing them over at shoulder length (Photo #2); while still lowering your crossed arms turn your hands again so that the palms are facing the ceiling (Photo #3); continue moving them out to your sides and into an arm ripple. This is done in *one continuous* movement.

ARM RIPPLE—Upper arms and shoulders.

Position both arms out to your sides horizontally. Raise one arm up and the other arm down in *one continuous* movement. The hand on the arm that is raised is flexed downward, with fingers pointing toward the floor and the arm that is lowered has the hand flexed upward with fingers pointing toward the ceiling. If you keep your elbow pointed toward the ceiling and push your shoulder forward when raising your arm, you will get a beautiful snake-like effect. (See Photo #4.)

BELLY ROLL—Excellent for the midriff and abdomen.

Do not move any other part of your body as you do this movement. Pull the muscles under your rib cage in and upward as much as possible; pull in and tighten your abdominal muscles—now push out the *lower* part of your abdomen; slowly pull it in again raising it upward. Repeat 3 or 4 times.

BELLY ROLL & PELVIC ROCK—Midriff, abdomen, hips and thighs.

Stand with feet parallel, knees *slightly* bent and abdominal muscles pushed out. (Photo #5.) GRADUALLY start tilting your pelvis upward pulling your abdominal muscles in and bend slowly at the knees, all at the same time so that the arch in your back becomes almost straight near your waistline and your shoulders are pushed slightly forward. (Photo #6.) Now rock your pelvis backward,

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slowly relaxing your abdominal muscles as you bend forward at the waist. (Photo #7.) Repeat these three basic belly roll movements *continuously,* rocking forward and backward until it resembles a rippling motion of the spine and hips. A complete pelvic rock is done to the count of four beats. This is one of the most important movements in the dance. Both shallow and deep pelvic rocks are effective.

WALKING BELLY ROLLS

Use the three basic belly roll pelvic rock movements listed above. Stand in first position and raise your right leg up on the ball of your right foot bending at the knee; continue lifting your foot completely off the floor swaying it forward about 6″ as you move into second position; gradually place it down on the floor in front of you as you move into third position. Repeat this complete movement on the left leg and continue this walking belly roll 5 or 6 times. This is done during the slower tempos.

SHOULDER SHIMMY—Shoulders and upper arms.

Relax both shoulders completely (do not hunch them). Extend both arms out to your sides about 10″ to 12″, elbows slightly bent, hands flexed upward at the wrists with palms facing down. Push your right shoulder forward and your left shoulder back at the same time in *one* movement. Move them continuously back and forth in a graceful quivering manner to the rhythm of the music .(Photo #8.)

PHOTO #4

LATERAL NECK MOVEMENTS—Good for double chins and releasing tension in the back of your neck.

Keep your head and body straight; do not *turn, twist* or *tilt* your head in any direction. Move only your *neck* muscles, first to the right and then to the left. (Photo #9.) Once you have mastered this movement you can easily rotate your head on its axis by pushing it to the right, forward, left, and back, in one continuous movement. Repeat 2 or 3 times.

DEEP KNEE BEND WALK—Excellent for your calves and thighs.

Shift all of your weight on to your left foot as you slowly lift your right foot about 6″ off the floor. Advance it forward about 10″ and to the left at an angle, with toes pointing to the right, bending deeply at the knees as you place it flat on the floor in front of you (you should now be up on the ball of your left foot). Repeat this same movement with your left foot, bending deeply up and down as you walk forward about 4 or 5 times, finally dancing out into the basic step. Timing is very important during this movement. (Photo #10.)

DEEP KNEE BEND PIVOT—Calves and thighs.

Place your right foot in front of your left foot with toes pointing to the right, bending at the knees. Pivot to the left until your left foot ends up in front of your right foot. Position your feet the same way as in Photo #10. Combine this movement with a shoulder shimmy to slow music.

PHOTO #5

PHOTO #6

PHOTO #7

PHOTO #8

Hip Movements

All hip movements should be done in a cantilever position in which the hips are brought forward as you bend back slightly from the waist up, with knees relaxed. This is very important. Try to keep the upper portion of your body still while moving your hips. There are two main positions in the following hip movements.

PHOTO #9

FRONT-CANTILEVER POSITION

The hips are pushed forward as you tilt back slightly from the waist up; knees relaxed with feet parallel (about 12″ apart) and flat on the floor. (Photo #11.)

SIDE-CANTILEVER POSITION

The hips are pushed forward as you tilt back slightly from the waist up; left leg straight but not tense; feet about 6″ apart with the right leg turned out and bent at the knee; heel raised about 2″ off the floor. Shift most of your weight onto your left leg. (Photo #12.)

HORIZONTAL FIGURE EIGHT This will take inches off your waist, midriff and hips.

Stand in front-cantilever position (Photo #13.) Raise your right hip by pushing up on the ball of your right foot; sway to the left and lower your heel to the floor. Now raise your left hip in the same way and sway to the right. Repeat 3 or 4 times to the rhythm of the music.

SIDE TO SIDE HIP JERK—Waist, hips and thighs.

Stand in front-cantilever position (Photo #11). Jerk your right hip

PHOTO #10

once in a twisting motion to the right and back again to its original position and once to the left in the same way; now twice to the right and twice to the left and so on into a subtle shimmy-shake.

PHOTO #11

SHIMMY SHAKE—This will really burn up the calories!

Stand in front-cantilever position. Bend your right knee, keeping your left knee straight and vice versa. Start off slowly, gradually increasing your movements into a subtle shimmy-shake. This is more effective in the faster tempos.

HIP TWIST PIVOT—Good for the waist, hips and thighs.

Assume the side-cantilever position. (Photo #12.)

Twist your right hip to the left, pivoting on both feet at the same time. Do not lift your left foot off the floor during this movement. Quickly lift the ball of your right foot off the floor advancing it about 6″ as you drop your right hip to its original position. Pivot in a complete circle to the left; switch your feet in the opposite direction and pivot in a complete circle to the right in the same way, to the beat of the drums.

WALKING HIP JERK

Stand in front-cantilever position. Place your right foot forward about 6″; knee bent with heel raised about 2″ off the floor as if you were about to start walking. Shift all of your weight onto your left leg. Jerk your right hip forward and back in a short twisting motion, now take another short step with the *same* foot. Bring your left foot forward and repeat in the same way. Repeat about 4 or 5 times.

PHOTO #12

FULL TURN WITH SIDE DIP

Place your right foot forward in front of you about 8″; turn yourself around to the left until your left foot lands directly in front of your right foot. Now bring your right foot forward to parallel with your left foot; place your left foot in back of your right foot, bending at the knees as you do this with one arm up over your head and the other arm down (Photo #14). Now parallel your left foot with your right foot; sway and bring your right foot behind the left foot in the same way. This movement is done rather quickly and should be in perfect time with the music.

FULL TURNS LIFTING BOTH FEET OFF THE FLOOR

Lift one foot off the floor and then the other foot continuously for about 4 or 5 times. Keep the upper portion of your body in good alignment as you turn. When you can do this without becoming dizzy, try turning with a changing and swinging body axis.

BACK BEND—Flattens your abdomen, strengthens your lower back muscles and trims your waistline.

This is done to slow music, standing on your feet or on your knees during a floor routine. Slowly lower yourself to the floor, arching your back on the way down (Photo #15). Flatten your torso as much as possible (Photo #16). Arch your back on the way up again.

PHOTO #14

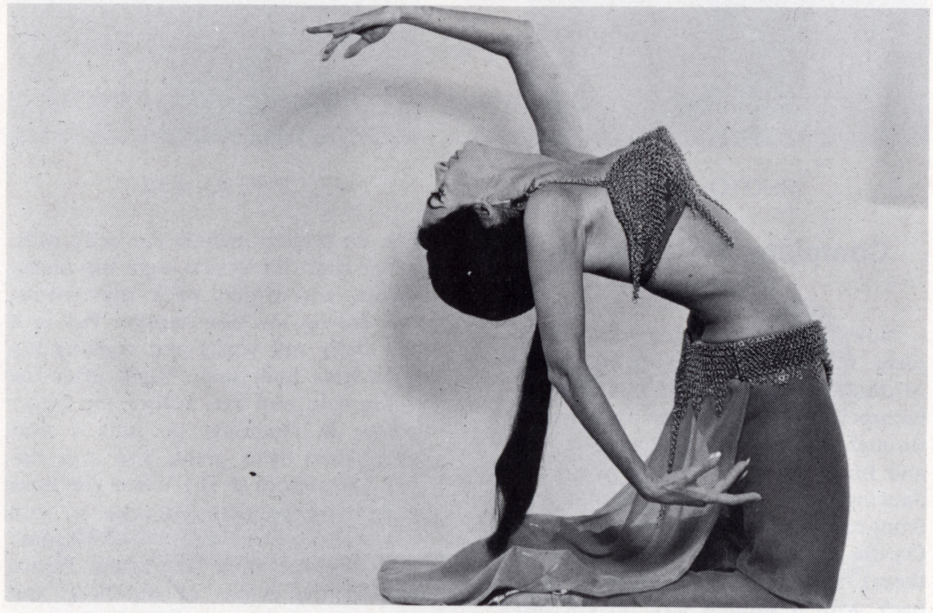


PHOTO #15

PHOTO #13

PHOTO #16

FINGER CYMBALS (ZILS)

Place one cymbal on your thumb and one on your second finger just below the nail beds. Hitting them strongly together and releasing them quickly will give you a ringing sound. Hit them together first on one hand and then on the other hand *continuously* without pausing, to every beat of the music. If this is too difficult, try hitting them twice on one hand and once on the other hand to the rhythm of the music. This takes a great deal of practice. (Note picture on front of booklet.)

PHOTO #17

PHOTO #18

PHOTO #19

Complete Belly Dance Routine

Now I'm going to give you a complete belly dance routine to *Raks Mustapha*. Use your own imagination, incorporating the basic movements throughout the dance. Put your veil and finger cymbals on and come out dancing with your hips leading in front-cantilever position (Photo #17). On the drum roll (there are three of them) twist your hip forward and back with a sudden jerk on the *last beat*. Continue with the fast dancing, keeping time with the finger cymbals and use as many of the arm and hip movements listed in the previous section. Don't remain in one area, move all around the dance floor using as much space as possible.

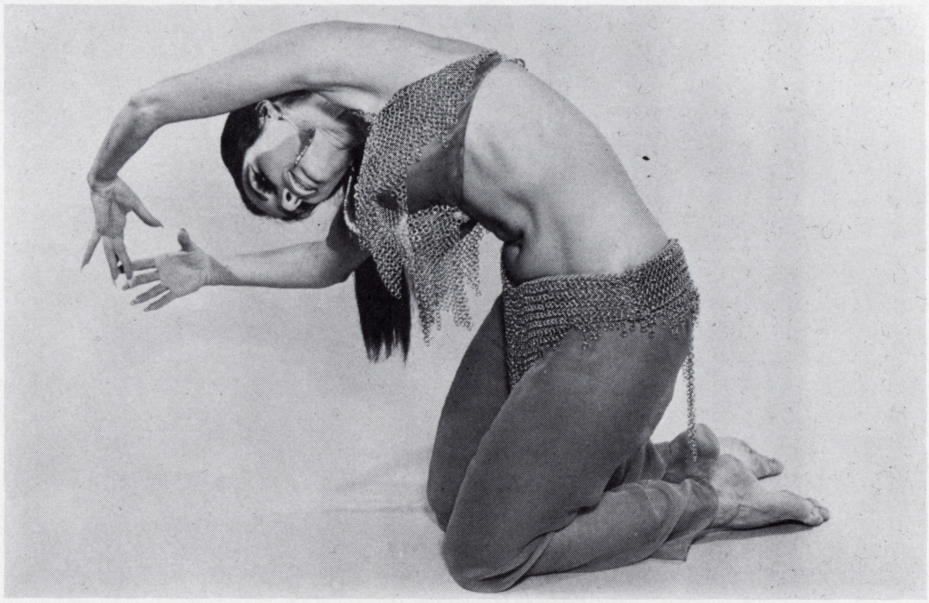
When the singer stops singing and the music moves into a slower tempo, (confine your dancing to the center of the floor) start removing your veil very *slowly*. Turn around a few times swaying your veil all around your body very gracefully. Bring it up under your neck and put in a few lateral neck movements, also rotate it on its axis once or twice. (See Photo #18.)

Just before the drum roll comes in, drop your veil off to the side and assume the side cantilever position. On the drum roll move your hips *quickly* in a twisting motion left-right-left-right, accentuating your hip on the last beat. Now dance all around the floor in a slow and graceful manner. Be sure to include the belly rolls, pelvic rock, horizontal eight hip movements, arm ripple, neck movements, etc. during the slow tempo. Put in a few belly roll walks and walking hip jerks here and there. Right after the violin solo and just before the singer comes in chanting, go into a slow deep knee bend pivot, and arm ripple. (See Photo #10.) When you have completed the pivot, continue on with a deep knee bend walk (4 or 5 times) and into the basic step again. Dance toward the center of the floor and turn around three or four times dropping to the floor on your knees into cantilever position. (See Photo #19.) If this movement is too difficult for you, then go into a slow deep knee bend; pivot until both feet *parallel* each other. Gracefully lower yourself to the floor into cantilever position. (Do not play the cymbals during the floor routine. This is the time to accentuate the beauty of your arms and hands.) Arch your back and lower yourself to the floor. (See Photo #16.) Turn to either side. (Photo #20), bending over so that your face is opposite the floor. (Photos 21 and 22) and make a complete circle with your body arching your

PHOTO #20

back on the way up again. (See Photo #15) Now pivot on both knees to the right and in one movement slide and bend your right knee forward in front of you so that your buttocks rest on your right heel and your left leg is extended behind you. (See Photo #23.) Lower your chest and head as close to the floor as possible in front of you very slowly, moving your arms in all directions. Gradually raise your chest and head up again into a sitting position. Raise both arms up over your head into a stationary position with wrists back to back and fingers flexed. Move your head laterally 3 or 4 times and rotate it on its axis. (Photo #24.) Now lift yourself slightly and pivot to the opposite side on both knees and repeat the same movements. Slowly slide your right knee forward to parallel with your left knee and at the same time do a few arm ripples and neck movements as you raise your buttocks up off the floor (you should now be in an upright position on both knees). Lift your left knee up so that your left foot is flat on the floor in front of you. Place most of your weight on your right knee and pivot toward the left into a complete circle using your left foot to push yourself around. Shake your shoulders as you pivot. (Photo #25.) When you have made a complete circle, come up slowly and dance out into the basic step again.

Stand in the side cantilever position for the drum solo. Start off with a slow shimmy, accentuating your hips on the prominent drum beats and work up into a fast shimmy. When the tambourine comes in start playing your cymbals to the fast tempo and dance all around the floor inserting many of the basic movements. End the dance by turning around a few times and lower yourself to the floor. (Photo #26.)



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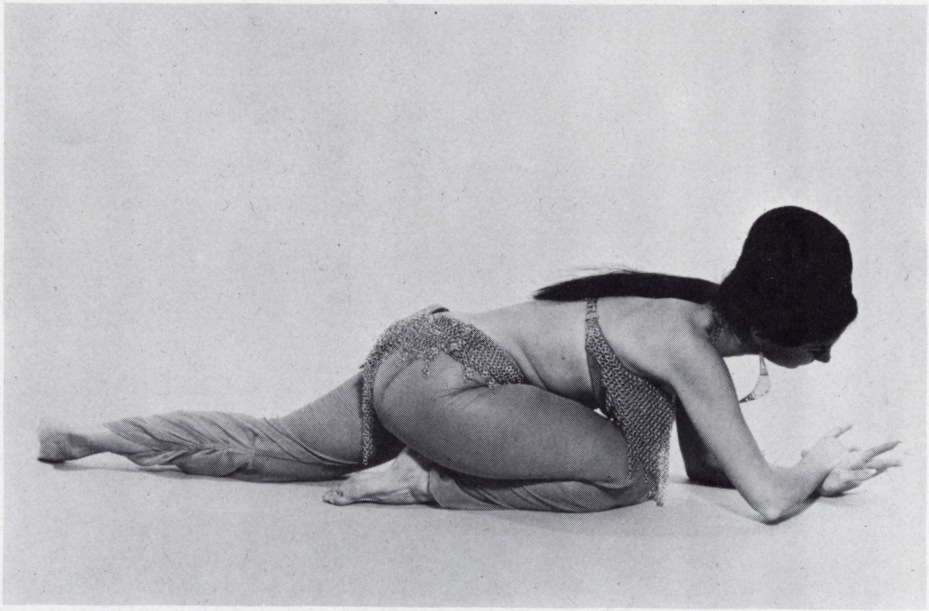

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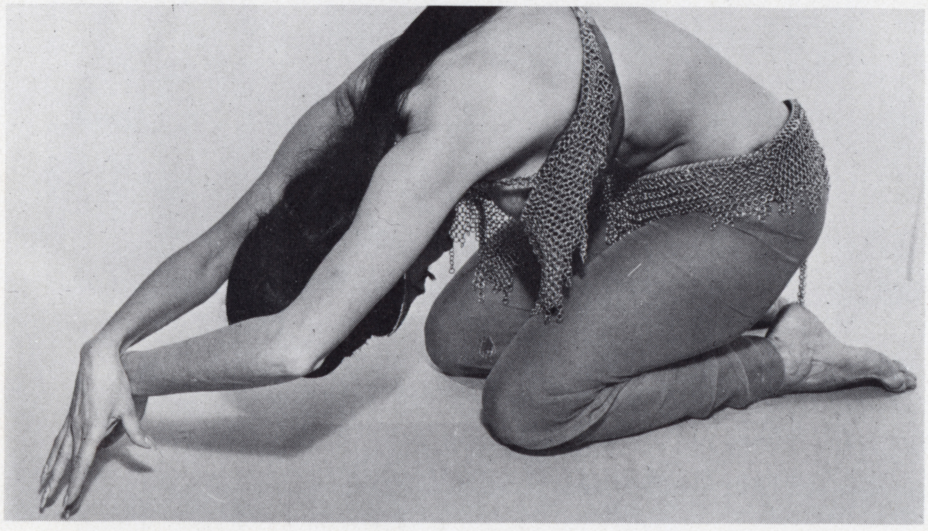
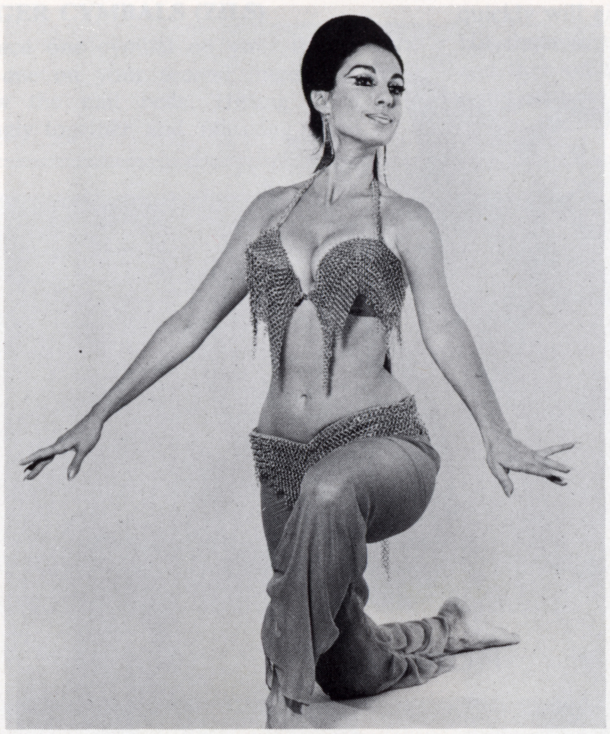


PHOTO #21

PHOTO #24



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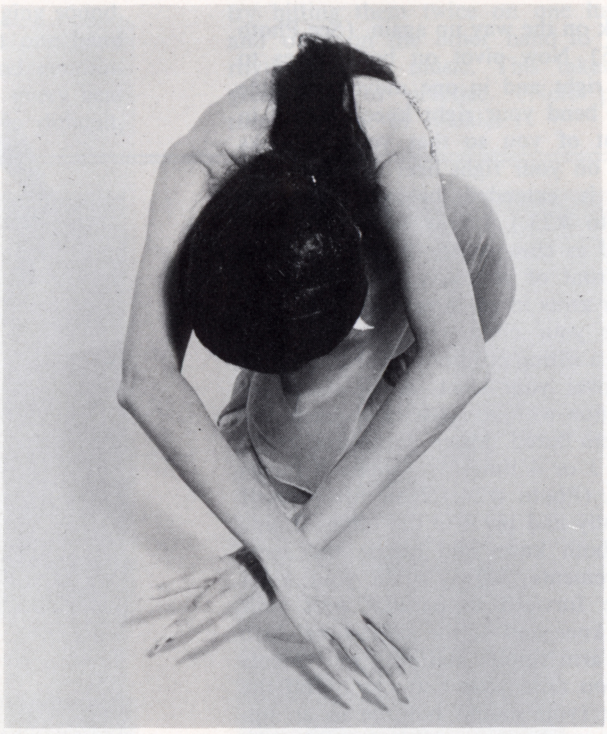
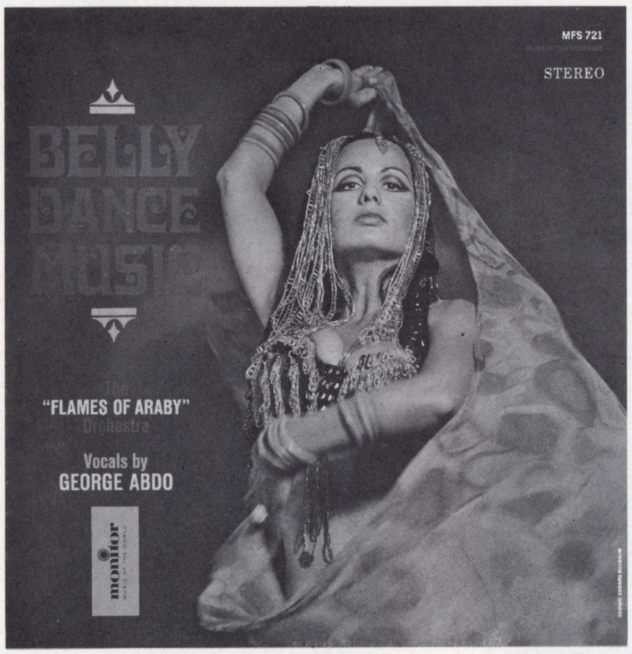
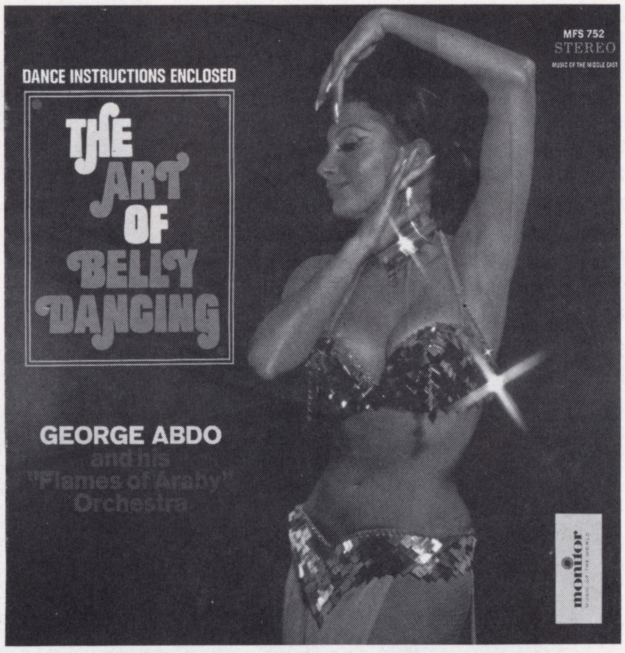


PHOTO #26

THE EXCITING MUSIC OF GEORGE ABDO ON MONITOR RECORDS



BELLY DANCE MUSIC: MFS 721



THE ART OF BELLY DANCING: MFS 752

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Printed in U.S.A.